

KING COUNTY
Kent Pullen Regional Communications and Emergency
Coordination Center



3511 NE 2nd Street, Renton, WA 98056

King County Sheriff's Office Communications Center
206-296-7500 www.metrokc.gov/sheriff

King County's Emergency Coordination Center
206-296-3830 www.metrokc.gov/prepare

Welcome to our regional center! This project has been developing in the minds of many for decades and it is with great pride that we share some of the features of this beautiful structure with you. Within this building, there exist two separate but complementary programs, the Sheriff's Communications Center and the Executive's Office of Emergency Management. This facility features Communications Center spaces, Emergency Coordination Center spaces and some shared spaces that are used by both agencies. We occupied this facility in the summer of 2003.

About King County

King County, Washington covers over 2,200 square miles of varied terrain ranging from mountains to river valleys. Approximately 1.8 million people reside in this county, three quarters of them in one of our 39 cities, which include Seattle and Bellevue. Over 120 other political subdivisions provide a variety of disciplines including fire services, water and sewer, hospitals, libraries, and others.

We are susceptible to many different hazards with earthquake having the highest potential impact and floods and winter storms being our most frequent nature caused disaster. Human caused incidents including acts of terrorism and chemical releases are also events that could disrupt normal business in our community.

King County Sheriff's Office Communications Center

With a staff of 86 allotted personnel, the King County Sheriff's Communications Center is a section of the Technical Services Division that provides call receiving, dispatching, report writing and other critical support services to over 560,000 citizens. The service area covers unincorporated King County to include 13 cities that contract for police service, plus King County Metro Police and King County Airport Police. In 2003, 680,000 calls were received by this agency; approximately 50% of those were 911 calls. Deputies were dispatched to handle 130,000 incidents that year and Communications Specialists wrote approximately 20,000 reports for citizens in 2003.

A Sheriff's Office Captain commands the Communications Center and has office support from an Administrative Specialist III. A civilian Operations Manager directs 7 Operations Supervisors, who manage 70 Communications Specialists working in the Operations Unit of the Center. These are the people performing the phone answering and dispatching duties who work on continuous 8-hour shifts. In addition, there is a Training Coordinator responsible for over-seeing both the in-house training academies for call receiving and dispatching, as well as scheduling outside training opportunities. A Technical Support Supervisor manages three staff members responsible for tape requests, support for the computer aided dispatch (CAD) systems, support for the phone and E-911 systems, and a host of special projects.

All calls are received and processed by an electronic call router and delivered to waiting call receiving staff based on whether 911 or a 7-digit number was dialed. The call is answered and screened for emergency response criteria by a **primary operator**. If a deputy is to respond, the operator enters the information into CAD and it is electronically routed to the proper dispatcher. If the call can be handled without deputy response, or is a report to be taken here, the caller is routed to a **secondary** or non-emergency **operator** to acquire the necessary information. **Dispatchers** process the information received in CAD, or from deputies talking to them on the radio. Dispatchers may have as many as 50 units on one radio channel, coordinating work between Sheriff's Office deputies and detectives as well as providing radio contact for contract cities, KC Animal Control and Metro Transit Police.

KCSO Communication Center Footprint

The *current* operational design and space is comprised of:

- **Main Operations floor** that provides 20 Call Taker (CT) stations, ten Dispatch (D) stations and two supervisor stations; both are CT & D capable. Typically, we have approximately 13 CT stations in use and six Dispatch stations for Metro, North, Northwest, Southeast, Southwest and Animal Control.
- **Secondary Operations** comprised of five dispatch capable workstations, eight call taker stations and one supervisor station that is CT & D capable. The Secondary Operations area is designed as a training station for new Call Takers and Dispatchers. In the event of a major emergency, it also serves as an additional emergency backup station and for backup use for Valley Communications in the event their system fails.

Training:

Operators (primary and secondary) have successfully completed 320 hours of classroom training, plus on-the-job training which will eventually total 512 hours of training, before they are allowed to answer emergency calls alone. Dispatchers have successfully completed all necessary call receiving training, worked here at least 18 months and then have had to complete 96 more hours of class room training, in addition to 288 hours *more* on-the-job training. Supervisors have completed all these courses, have worked here three years or more, and have successfully completed a promotional process.

King County Office of Emergency Management Emergency Coordination Center

The emergency management program for King County coordinates disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery activities. Building partnerships and developing regional capabilities is critical in its mission to “provide leadership and high quality services that improve the safety of the public in King County.” Currently, there are 15 employees working in the emergency management program, nine full time employees and six grant funded temporaries. In addition to the regional administration and development of homeland security programs and grants, our office takes a role in several other regional programs including leading the development of a Regional Disaster Plan and a Regional Mitigation Plan for many agencies. Other program areas include operations, logistics and resource management, public education, public information, plans, hazardous materials, training and exercises.

Monitors are located in various areas of the building and they provide connectivity to the general AV system including television and other displays placed on selected channels. In addition, a telephone paging system and wi-fi for public access are available throughout the building.

Office, Lobby and Storage Areas

Our office areas include 12 cubicles, two offices and one administrative area that support 14 workstations. This space is accessible by proximity card and includes a walk up window at the reception area adjacent to the lobby. Square footage is approximately 2,200 sf for the office areas. Cubicles are designed so that they may be used during emergencies for activities such as planning or logistics. Features include a warning area with various radios, Emergency Alert System, and computer set up to broadcast lists for information distribution. The hard walled offices provide privacy for executive staff should they need it during emergencies. These offices also include television and radio capability.

The storage area is equipped with three storage racks and is already fully utilized. It was finished with a drop down ceiling and a window in case it needs to become office space for future expansion.

Hallways throughout the building were built extra-wide to accommodate standup meetings. The lobby includes a comfortable seating area and plenty of room for people who are waiting to be checked through security into the Emergency Coordination Center. Plasma screens in the lobby will display emergency information, directions, or schedules for the week.

Policy/Conference Room and Training/Media Briefing Room

Policy – approximately 380 sf, Training/Media Briefing – 600 sf

These rooms are considered part of our shared space and are available during non-activation times for use as conference or training rooms. The Media Briefing Room holds approximately 25 people for training sessions with tables and 50 in a theater style

configuration. The policy room accommodates 18 around a large conference table and is generally used for meetings.

These rooms are equipped with many of the same features. They both include the capability for video teleconferencing (one or the other, not both at the same time). Telephones and LAN accessibility are located at multiple work areas. A computer, document camera, VCR, DVD, projector, and television may be utilized in both rooms. There is a connecting door between these two rooms with a proximity reader located to limit access to the Policy Room.

The policy room is designed as an area where the County Executive and other decision makers will gather during an event to address policy level issues. The Media Briefing Room will be used during small to moderate sized events as a place to hold press conferences. Pathways and racks exist for media access to this room if they want to install wiring prior to an event. Electricity has been supplied in a remote box outside for the use of four media trucks during events. Additional lighting for television cameras and an appropriately colored backdrop were added after construction to enhance the effectiveness of the Media Briefing Room.

Coordination Room – Approximately 3600 sf

The Coordination Room remains in an operationally ready state at all times. Though occasionally it is used for large training sessions, the configuration of furniture and equipment is not moved. During emergencies or disasters this space is the first area occupied along with the Communications Room. There are nine pods established each with eight workstations. Three pods are assigned permanent positions; the Joint Information Center (adjacent to their breakout room), Information and Plans, and the Message Center and Logistics, with the other six pods flexible depending on the nature and scope of the event. Each workstation is equipped with headphones (for listening to audio on displays), a telephone, and a computer hook-up (either LAN or modem access). In addition this room has wi-fi connectivity, wireless headphones for assisted listening devices, television, and AM/FM radio. There is the capability to have three different Automatic Call Distribution systems running on various telephones at the same time. Each of these ACDs can be expanded from one to a maximum of 16-20 phones. The original intent was to use them for incoming ECC calls, media calls, and damage assessment calls. The third damage assessment line could be used for any situation where one phone number needs to be expanded to a call center concept. Four workstations designated along the west wall are for display computers and GIS. Other features include printers, plotters, fax machines, and a copier located within the large room as well as in office areas.

Audio Visual

The audiovisual system includes three large screens with rear projection. 12 additional monitors are located in the front and rear of the room to provide additional displays. The AV system includes DVD, VCR, document camera, six computer inputs, video camera, television (satellite, cable and antenna), and KU Band. This system is controlled by a touch pad control screen, which is hard-wired in one of three stations at the front of the

room or operated by remote control. A microphone is located at each pod and also at the front podium for briefings. A paging system is also in place through the telephone system that can be operated by various zones throughout the building. Recently, we purchased an information management system called WebEOC to help us organize, display, and distribute information during disasters. The projectors and displays will provide information for all those working inside the building.

Communications Room – Approximately 600 sf

The Communications Room that is located adjacent to the main Coordination Room includes eight carrels and 13 workstations. Multiple radios and communications devices are located in this room, which provide us the capability to maintain communications in a variety of ways. Again, telephones are provided throughout including a satellite phone. Radio systems support a variety of agencies and partners who use 800 MHz trunked systems, UHF, VHF, and amateur bands. Numerous partner agencies have chosen to place one of their radios in this communications area for their use during activations. They include local utilities, state and federal agencies. A small tower and roof antennas adjacent to this room supports most of the radios located here.

One of the nice features of this room is that it is separated from the Coordination Room by a large sliding glass door as well as a normal door. This door may remain open during small activations to provide complete accessibility to communications by ECC representatives. During a large activation when noise is an issue, the large slider may be closed to reduce noise.

Breakout Rooms, JIC, Plans, Health EOC – approximately 1,000 sf

The breakout rooms are adjacent to the Coordination Room and next to the ECC Communications Room. There is one large room that is divided by moveable walls into three separate areas, each of which is a little over 330 sf.

The Joint Information Center is a room that is equipped with six televisions (headsets available but not required) that are independent of each other and of the main AV system. These sets are used to monitor media broadcasts. In addition there are numerous telephones and access to the LAN. Public Information Officers from county departments and partnering agencies use this room to develop coordinated messages that will be sent to the media and will in turn help our citizens respond appropriately to the incident.

One of the other two rooms is designated as the Health EOC if the situation warrants that it open. If not, the room is available for planning sessions or other side meetings during the incident. Again, numerous telephones and LAN hookups are provided. Public Health has pre-positioned certain items in this room such as a fax, reference books, and supplies to make their set up easy and efficient.

The third room is available for planning meetings. Depending on the situation, the wall may remain open to accommodate either expansion of the Health EOC or of the JIC. Again, phones and LAN connections are available in this room.

Kitchen and Courtyard

The kitchen and courtyard areas are again shared spaces meant for the use by all employees who work in the building. The kitchen is equipped with three refrigerators, stove and oven, two microwaves, vending machines, ice machine, phones and television. It is not large enough to provide an eating area for anything larger than a small to moderate ECC activation, but food can be prepared and served buffet style in an unused room or a large hallway. The courtyard is a secured area and provides space where those involved in an activation can get away for a quiet moment outdoors. It is also a smoking area.

Other Features and Support Systems

- Power backups include dual UPS and dual generators.
- Over 300 telephones are located throughout the building and there is redundant service.
- 150' radio communications tower and 50' amateur radio tower.
- HVAC has dual air handlers, either capable of supporting critical functions in entire building.
- Raised flooring is located in various rooms though not throughout the building.
- Base isolation pads and seismic bracing and straps are in place throughout the building as non-structural mitigation measures.
- 15,000 gallons of potable water and food are stored on site to provide self-sufficiency for a minimum of three days.
- The building is structurally hardened to withstand ground shaking.
- Security cameras are located in various areas of the building and outside.
- Employee parking includes 72 spaces, is fenced, and lighted. An additional 100 parking spaces are available for visitors and ECC activations.
- Showers are available on premise but no bunkroom.
- 3,000 sf concrete pad includes electricity and data ports to support large events.
- Weather station on site.
- T1, INET, Fiber optic cable as well as Wi-Fi are all used in the building.
- Tackable wall surfaces, moveable white boards throughout ECC spaces.
- Coffee area for activation and large meeting use is separate from the kitchen.

We are happy to share our experiences with those who are building similar facilities. For more information you may call the Office of Emergency Management at 206-296-3830 or the Sheriff's Office Communications Center at 206-296-7500.

Regional Communications and Emergency Coordination Center (RCECC)



ECC Coordination Room



Policy Room



Communications Center Operations



Front Entrance



Courtyard Fountain



Radio Tower



Wi-Fi